

STATES OF INVENTION:
DISORIENTATION AND *PARANGOLÉ*

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The complexity of Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés* poses a challenge to art historians. The multiplicity of the *Parangolés*' iterations coupled with their unclear history make them hard to define, and consequently hard to put in dialogue with other aesthetic practices. As a performance rooted in improvisation, *Parangolé* is mutable and morphological in its methodologies. They are performances of queerness, experiments in how queerness is activated as a mode of inquiry. To inhabit queer space in these ways is to explore methods for combatting injustice, conditioning, and complacency. Using Hélio Oiticica's words, *Parangolés* initiate a "state of invention" that turns viewers into co-creators, participators who collectively watch and wear *Parangolé* objects as a means towards queer ends.

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I. DISORIENTATING ORIGINS

In terms of avant-garde practices, few works have as complicated a history as Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés*. Most basically, *Parangolés* are performances by individuals who wear *Parangolé* objects—which resemble capes, flags, and tents—and dance. *Parangolés* are often defined as the capes and banners used in performances of the genre, but they are something more.¹ Irene Small implies as much when she describes the genre as a “cape [...] a malleable architecture and also a skin”.² While *Parangolé* involves the wearing and/or bearing of an object such as a “cape”, it is “malleable architecture”, something manipulated and inhabited, and a “skin”, an essential component of an individual's physical being. While *Parangolés* are physically traced through the material components of their realization, they are relational works that enfold the physical within the conceptual.

Parangolés insist upon communal interactions to be realized. Unique to this genre is the fact that the watchers of performances are also considered performers themselves. Those who perform must be watched, and those who watch must be engaged by the performer. The very word *Parangolé*, which comes from Brazilian-Portuguese slang, connotes an, “animated situation and sudden confusion and/or agitation between people”.³ This ambiguous “animation” fluctuates depending on context; it is neither positive nor negative until uttered. It has no distinct point of origin, as it is a manifestation of the “between”, the relationship of two persons. A performance of *Parangolé* is thus not attributed to a single artist such as Oiticica, but to an “anonymous collective genius”, the group of individuals

¹ Here I use “genre” as Oiticica does in his writings on *Parangolé* and his other classes of work (*Núclei, Bóides*, etc.), which he categorized as distinct *gêneros* (“genres” or “genders”) of his *oeuvre*.

² Small, Irene. *Hélio Oiticica: Folding the Frame*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 181.

³ Oiticica, Hélio. “Fundamental Bases for the Definition of *Parangolé*” in *The Great Labyrinth*. tr. Susanne Gaensheimer et al. (Frankfurt, Germany: Museum Für Moderne Kunst, 2013), Footnote 1.

who together realize *Parangolé*.⁴ While *Parangolé* capes and banners can be singularly attributed to Hélio Oiticica, documentation of performances can and should be attributed to the groups of individuals who, in their performance, realize an ephemeral collective in pursuit of *Parangolé*. Unfortunately, contemporary discourse around the genre has rarely preserved the communal authorship of *Parangolé*, attributing the works to Oiticica and on rare occasions including only the nicknames of wearers and watchers (typically black or Afro-Brazilian), giving a racially-charged, colonial tinge to the “anonymous” status of Oiticica’s co-creators.

The exact origins of *Parangolé* are somewhat elusive as scholars vary in what they believe to be the “official” beginning of the genre. In an apocryphal story, Oiticica describes a strange makeshift structure in the *favela* of Mangueira he encountered that inspired him to create *Parangolés*. The structure consisted of four wood posts precariously supporting a tarp labeled “*Parangolé*”. No photograph exists because Oiticica claims the structure had disappeared by the time he returned to document it.⁵ Nevertheless, Oiticica cites this encounter as the spark of inspiration for his *Parangolés*.

In contemporary scholarship, however, the origin of *Parangolé* is often considered the public debut of the genre at *Opinião 65*, the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio’s (MAM Rio’s) first major exhibition after Brazil’s 1964 military coup d’état. On opening night, Oiticica marched to the museum with a crowd of colleagues from Mangueira. The crowd were the “anonymous collective genius” activated to perform *Parangolé*. In a now iconic turn of events, Oiticica’s companions were refused entry to MAM Rio on the basis of their race.⁶

⁴ Oiticica, Hélio and Mário Barata. “Hélio Oiticica: A vanguarda deve jogar for a o esteticismo” in *Jornal do Commercio*, 16 July 1967, quoted in Paola Berenstein Jacques, *Estética da ginga: A arquitetura das favelas através da obra de Hélio Oiticica* tr. Laura Harris (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Casa da Palavra, 2001), 32.

⁵ Unnamed text by Hélio Oiticica quoted in Harris, 47.

⁶ Marília Palmeira notes that, in the aftermath of the 1964 coup, *Crioulo não entra* [Creoles not allowed] was an unspoken rule at upper-class Brazilian institutions such as MAM Rio (Palmeira 284).

Rather than separate from his group, Oiticica remained outside the museum encouraging his companions to continue their performance of *Parangolé* late into the night.

A photograph from this night (Fig. 1), most likely taken by one of Oiticica's brothers, captures the joyous energy excited by Oiticica and his collaborators. In the background of the image looms the recognizable angled buttresses of MAM Rio. Dizzying lights trace haphazard angles across the photograph, suggesting the camera itself is excited to movement between its shutter opening and closing. The lights effectively flatten the image, blurring the distinction between foreground and background. The foreground of the photograph is teeming with figures, all of whom face left. They move together: looking at one another, smiling, and holding hands. Many of them are wearing *Parangolé* capes. A man holds Oiticica's *P1 Parangolé Estandarte* (1964) above the crowd, which serves as a banner of identity for the group. A young boy waves *P2 Parangolé Bandeira 01* (1964) as a flag. A solitary figure stands shrouded to the right, gleefully observing the gathered crowd. It is Oiticica, wearing *P8 Parangolé capa 05, Homenagem a Mangueira* (1965). In contrast to the figures on the left, Oiticica faces away from the camera and stands almost perfectly still.

The story of *Opinião 65* has taken precedence for many who discuss *Parangolé* as the defining moment for Oiticica's genre, but its popularity does not change the fact Oiticica presented yet another potential origin of *Parangolé*. A 1964 photograph by Hélio Oiticica and French artist Desdemone Bardin titled *Gênese do Parangolé* [Genesis of the *Parangolé*] (Fig. 2) purports yet another source for the genre, adding to the already complicated origin of *Parangolé*. The photograph shows a sapling tree in a square planter base. Instead of fertile soil, a bottle, metal canisters, and shoes have been gathered around the foot of the tree to facilitate its growth. Tied to the branches of the tree are swaths of fabric, which appear to sprout from the thin trunk. The tree stands near parked cars bordering the grounds of MAM

Rio, which can be seen in the background of the image, and where—in just one year—Oiticica and his friends would publicly debut *Parangolé*.

With varied points of origin, *Parangolé* is a genre lacking cohesive directionality; it simultaneously tends towards different ends. As a whole, these stories of an elusive shanty, a public display of solidarity, and a mythical tree situate *Parangolé* within three distinct contexts. Collectively and individually they demonstrate the inherently disorientating effects of *Parangolé*. They are “disorientating” in that they entail an initial orientation set askew. Each aforementioned story details a disorientation in some way. When Oiticica is bent on returning to the *Parangolé* structure, he arrives at the site only to find it has vanished, leaving him unable to reach the destination of his journey. The 1965 procession to *Opinião 65* ended with a refusal of entry, disrupting the artists’ initial orientation towards the museum institution and resulting in a new orientation towards the museum plaza. *Gênese do Parangolé* embodies disorientation in a more abstract manner. Initially, the photograph appears to demonstrate the fixedness of *Parangolé*’s “proximate, yet peripheral, relationship to art”.⁷ The *Parangolé* tree is literally rooted outside the walls of the museum, implying its permanent status as anti-art. But trees grow, reaching places far from where they begin. Trees have no single, frontal approach; they do not “face” a viewer from any singular side. The *Parangolé* tree pictured in Bardin and Oiticica’s photograph can (and will) grow towards the museum just as much as it grows away from it. *Gênese do Parangolé* is the epitome of a disorientated being, one that has no singular orientation and turns at will to face new orientations.

I argue that the emphasis on disorientation present in the origin of *Parangolé* make it a performance of queerness. *Parangolé* activates improvisation as a methodology for experimenting with queer existence. This inquiry examines the theoretical foundations of

⁷ Small, 189.

Parangolé Oiticica establishes in his philosophical writings, revealing this queer function in its totality. Oiticica's theorization is a solid foundational base from which decades of *Parangolé* performances have expanded. Approaching *Parangolé* from a theoretical perspective allows a circumnavigation of the genre's dubious origins, prioritizing instead its sustained practice through the late twentieth century into the present day. I put Oiticica's theory of *Parangolé* in dialogue with Sara Ahmed's queer phenomenology not to usurp or recontextualize his theorization of the genre, but to further illuminate and incorporate queer theoretical discourse into contemporary discussions of *Parangolé*.

II. IMPROVISATION AS METHODOLOGY

In his “Fundamental Bases for the Definition of *Parangolé*”, Oiticica defines the genre as “the specific experimental position, fundamental to the theoretical and existential comprehension of the entire work”.⁸ *Parangolé* is, first and foremost, a theoretical “position”, a state of mind from which an individual works. The language of experimentation here is indebted to Mario Pedrosa’s conception of the “experimental exercise of freedom,” which Pedrosa himself defines as art that is “not trying to dominate others” but instead engages life “how it is” in “total authenticity, which is creative authenticity”.⁹ Underlying each performance of *Parangolé* is an approach to art that seeks an “authentic” experience. Here, “authentic” is meant as encapsulating the whole life of the individual. *Parangolé* according to Oiticica “aims at this magical incorporation of the elements of the work as such, in the whole life-experience of the spectator, whom I [Oiticica] now call ‘participator’”.¹⁰ It is a mode of performance that engages the life of the “participator”, a term Oiticica uses to describe both those who watch *Parangolé* and those who perform *Parangolé* by adorning themselves with a cape or banner.

Oiticica’s theorization of *Parangolé* is closely linked to the Neoconcrete movement, of which he was a leading figure. In Pedro Erber’s *Breaching the Frame: The Rise of Contemporary Art in Brazil and Japan*, Erber characterizes Oiticica’s work as an “abstraction of politics”, a “mediated character” contained within an “aesthetic experience” typical of art in 1960s Brazil.¹¹ The “abstraction of politics” here refers to the Neoconcrete belief in the creation of

⁸ Oiticica, “Fundamental Bases for the Definition of *Parangolé*”, 151.

⁹ Pedrosa, Mario Antonio Manuel and Hugo Denizart. “Antonio Manuel: On Antonio Manuel’s Presentation at the Opening of the Salão Nacional de Arte Moderna, as a Work of Art” in *Mario Pedrosa: Primary Documents*. (New York City, NY: Museum of Modern Art, 2015), 326.

¹⁰ Oiticica, Hélio. “Notes on *Parangolé*” in *The Great Labyrinth*. tr. Susanne Gaensheimer et al. (Frankfurt, Germany: Museum Für Moderne Kunst, 2013), 158.

¹¹ Erber, Pedro R. *Breaching the Frame: The Rise of Contemporary Art in Brazil and Japan* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 22.

“new space” using pure form, line, and color to represent the “rhythms of the universe”, the “need to express the complex reality of modern humanity inside the structural language of new plasticity”.¹² In other words, Neoconcrete art serves not as an abstract escape from the world—the creation of a new field of vision or universe that exists in contradistinction to the reality of the viewer—but as a radical reentry and translation of the world into the language of abstraction. Supposed ruptures in existence that manifest in Neoconcrete art are not meant as intentional departures from the world, but rather as means to signify realities otherwise unseen.

As part of this radical entry into the reality of the viewer, the Neoconcretists “sought to reincorporate elements of emotion and affect that assigned primacy to the sensorial experience of the spectator who is called upon to participate actively in the production of meaning”.¹³ The incorporation of the “spectator” in Neoconcrete art calls upon not just their body, but their “emotion” and “affect”, elements that—while certainly containing corporeal elements—also include conceptual, intellectual components of being.

Many of Oiticica’s *Parangolé* objects themselves carry emotionally-charged messages: “sex and violence: that is what I like”, “your love I guard here”. These statements make affinities and desires—concepts with intense emotional components—an integral part of *Parangolé*. But emotions change, come and pass, and disappear, often without manifesting in a concrete form. Emotions, being relational qualities, “are slippery and hard to pin down. This is due, mainly to their being transitions where one thing becomes another *and* where

¹² Gullar, Ferreira. “Neo-Concrete Manifesto (1959)” in *100 Artists’ Manifestos*, ed. Alex Danchev (London, England: Penguin, 2011), 339 – 340.

¹³ Dunn, Christopher. “Experimental o Experimental: Avant-garde, Cultural Marginal, and Counterculture in Brazil 1968 - 72 in *Luso-Brazilian Review* (50:1, 2013), 233.

one thing becomes itself and not the other”.¹⁴ Emotions are an affective experience; individuals can be orientated and disorientated by others through the manipulation of their emotions.

Few theorists see Oiticica’s work as rife with emotion, resorting to the sanitized, scientific language of laboratory experimentation and rational Modernism that characterizes much of the theoretical discourse of his contemporaries. Mario Pedrosa, for example, argues in his writings that “perception, although inherently subjective, is guided by external reality and therefore resists the interference of our emotions”.¹⁵ As a formative critic and contemporary to Oiticica, Pedrosa has been seen as fundamental to understanding Oiticica’s work.¹⁶ Consequently, Oiticica’s work is seen as experiments with external phenomena.

This stands in contradiction to Oiticica’s insistence that the “whole life experience” of the participator become part of *Parangolé*. The whole life-experience of any individual is incomplete without their emotions. Indeed, emotionality plays a significant part in distinguishing the meaning of the genre to individual performers. As Irene Small notes, the *Parangolés* are an “external relation between a form and the participant him- or herself”, a physical trace of an individual’s interiority.¹⁷ It is emotion that assists in tailoring *Parangolé* to the individual, for each performer has their own emotional response to what unfolds in their performance. The consciousness of the performer is not just “embodied”, it is “sensitive”, prone to being affected and manipulated, especially through emotion.¹⁸ *Parangolé* gives

¹⁴ Hughes, Fiona. “Style in Communication: The Hip Swing of Hélio Oiticica’s *Parangolés*” in *Style in Theory*, ed. Ivan Callus, James Corby, and Gloria Lauri-Lucente (London, England: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 190.

¹⁵ Erber, 44.

¹⁶ Nelson, Adele. “There is No Repetition: Hélio Oiticica’s Early Practice” in *Hélio Oiticica: To Organize Delirium*. (Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Museum of Art, 2016). Exhibition catalogue, 44.

¹⁷ Small, 207.

¹⁸ Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 27.

concrete form to emotion, tracing its ebbs and flows through the activation of color and form, and incorporating the conceptual and physical into one another.

The “magical incorporation” of an individual’s entire life into the space of *Parangolé* is facilitated, in Oiticica’s opinion, through dance.¹⁹ It is through dance that *Parangolé* translates “emotion” into “motion”. Oiticica believes dance “does not propose an ‘escape’ from this immanent world, but reveals it in all of its plenitude, which would be for Nietzsche ‘Dionysian drunkenness’”.²⁰ Participation in *Parangolé* goes beyond the mere investiture with a cape, holding of a banner, or observation of a performance. A participator must “dance” within the object and engage with other dancers, occupying space in varying ways over a span of time, to realize *Parangolé*. The work, therefore, is incomplete until it is activated through dance.

The kind of dance Oiticica invokes here is variable. Many contemporary scholars have focused on Oiticica’s engagements with samba as particularly enlightening to his theorization of the genre. Indeed, Oiticica’s experiences with samba cannot go overlooked in analyzing *Parangolé*. What first drew him in an official capacity to Mangueira, the *favela* whose culture and people were integral to the formulation of the genre, was a commission to design sculptures for the Estação Primeira Samba School’s *Carnaval* float.²¹ In an effort to produce work attuned to the specifications of the Mangueira samba school, Oiticica took lessons and eventually was named a *passista*, a leader of a samba dance group.²²

In an often-cited quote from Oiticica’s “Notes on Dance”, Oiticica writes:

¹⁹ Oiticica, “Notes on *Parangolé*”, 157.

²⁰ Oiticica, Hélio. “Notes on Dance” in *The Great Labyrinth*. tr. Susanne Gaensheimer et al. (Frankfurt, Germany: Museum Für Moderne Kunst, 2013), 163.

²¹ Harris, Laura. *Experiments in Exile: C. L. R. James, Hélio Oiticica, and the Aesthetic Sociality of Blackness*. (New York City, NY: Fordham University Press, 2018), 27.

²² Small, 183.

My interest in dance, rhythm, and in my particular case, samba, came to me from a vital need for de-intellectualization, from intellectual dis-inhibition, from the need for free expression, since I felt threatened by my expression by excessive intellectualization.²³

One interpretation of the “de-intellectualization” through dance to which Oiticica refers is an un-learning, a dis-education. Recast alongside Oiticica’s belief in dance as the “Dionysian drunkenness” revealing the world “in all of its plenitude”, however, Oiticica meant not an un-learning but rather a translation of inaccessible, “intellectual”, theories of aesthetics into the common lexicon of dance. Oiticica recalls the “excessive intellectualization” of his formal education prevented him from being able to engage with “free expression”.²⁴ Dance was a means of further exploring what he already knew, of extending his prior knowledge into the realm of the unknown.

Oiticica’s interest in samba is not tied to its essential characteristic as a cultural product of the *favelas* as much as its improvisatory qualities, which manifest in many forms of dance. Samba “bespeaks a generalized practice, a dispersion of the singular event into a series of small acts and everyday rehearsals that are both repeated and newly invented on each occasion”.²⁵ While samba is codified with its *passistas*, schools of particular technique/tradition, and placement in *Carnaval* processions, its enactment is rooted in improvisation. With samba, “‘improvisation reigns, as opposed to organized choreography; in fact the freer the improvisation the better.’ Samba suggests, Oiticica proposes, ‘what creation through the corporeal act may be, a continuous transformability’”.²⁶ Dancers are

²³ Oiticica, “Notes on Dance”, 161.

²⁴ Oiticica was brought up in a well-off family and received an art education under Ivan Serpa at the Museu Arte Moderno do Rio from a very young age.

²⁵ Harris, 39.

²⁶ Boggs, Grace Lee. *Living for Change: An Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 61, quoted in Harris, 37.

choreographed insofar as they are expected to tell stories and follow pre-established schema, but the means by which they achieve these ends are left open-ended.

Parangolé can generally be understood as an engagement with *crelazer* (“creleisure”), a term Oiticica developed to define the activation of the full body and all its senses to “generate behavior-action” in a “total organic process”.²⁷ *Crelazer*—a conglomeration of “create” and “lazer” (Portuguese for “leisure”)—connotes the use of traditionally leisure activities as a “way to battle oppressive systematic ways of life”.²⁸ In the context of *Parangolé*, the perceived leisure is improvisatory dance, which casts off the “oppressive” nature of pre-determined choreography in favor of uninhibited expression. *Parangolé* demonstrates how leisure can lead to an “organic” behavior that reinforces the very “reason to exist”.²⁹

This engagement is not a “de-intellectualization” in the sense that improvisation requires less thought or intellectual rigor. As musician Arthur Rhames states in Danielle Goldman’s *I Want to Be Ready*, improvisation calls upon “all the resources of all the years of my playing at once: my academic understanding of the music, my historical understanding of the music, and my technical understanding of the instrument that I’m playing”.³⁰ Improvisation is in many ways the ultimate challenge for an artist. It demands a total, coherent convergence of all the artist’s life experiences into a single moment. To successfully improvise is to demonstrate an ability to synthesize and express the summation of one’s life through art. Improvisation is a “de-intellectualization” in that it operates free from the constraints of intellectual processes such as mental planning, formulaic presentation, and

²⁷ Oiticica, Hélio. “The Senses Pointing Toward a New Transformation” in *ARTMargins* (7:2, 2018), 132.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 135.

³⁰ Goldman, Danielle. *I Want to Be Ready: Improvised Dance as a Practice of Freedom* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 5 – 6.

rote execution. It leaves open the possibility for invention and spontaneity as improvising performers experiment with how to best draw upon their life experiences.

Improvisation in dance is, to quote Danielle Goldman, “a Foucauldian practice that resists the hardened stance (whether described as complacency, deserved relaxation, or celebration) that comes with the reification of freedom”.³¹ In other words, improvised dance is a practice that must be engaged in perpetuity to sustain the ends towards which it strives—specifically freedom. Freedom is itself a complicated notion. The idea “one can achieve freedom once and for all, and that one can rest afterward, is problematic” for several reasons.³² One explanation is that freedom has an unstable definition; its meaning varies depending on context. Another explanation is that freedom is arguably a performative act inasmuch as it must be continually sought. Freedom does not happen “once and for all” in that it must be actively preserved and retained.

Improvisation is a methodology of freedom. In dance, freedom can be obtained through continual engagement with improvisation, which provides the performer “a full-bodied critical engagement with the world, characterized by both flexibility and perpetual readiness”.³³ Improvised dance requires a performer to engage the entirety of their life experiences, which have conditioned how they move, and reconfigure them to produce new and fleeting expressions of themselves. Oiticica’s interest in samba stems from this desire to find a space in which life experiences can be “deintellectualized” through “free expression”, not so that they can be forgotten or discarded but so they can be processed and engaged as full-body experiences.

³¹ Ibid., 5.

³² Ibid., 3.

³³ Ibid., 5.

Samba is a particularly effective mode of dance when translated to *Parangolé* because it is a social form of dance. It relies on “the interplay of moving bodies and performative styles”.³⁴ Samba performers work in groups, responding to each other’s individual styles in such a way as to produce a cohesive whole. Improvisation in samba is engaged communally, producing a work with no single author. *Parangolé* functions in the same way. Wearers and watchers perform together as participators forming an “anonymous collective genius”. They respond to each other’s movements with their own. While each participator in *Parangolé* performs their own improvised movements that distinguish them from others, all are united in their shared “experimental position”.

In sum, Oiticica’s engagement with samba can be understood as an interest more generally in improvisatory dance as a methodology. The specific application of improvisation to samba lends itself well to Oiticica’s understanding of *Parangolé*, but it is not the only way improvisation comes to be. *Parangolé* demonstrates the malleability of improvisation as a tool for individuals in diverse contexts by encouraging “de-intellectualization”, the translation of experience, into the simultaneously individual and universal language of dance.

³⁴ Harris, 38.

III. CONTEMPORARY *PARANGOLÉS*

Many contemporary theorists construe Oiticica's infatuation with dance as an exclusive interest in samba, a cultural product of the *favelas*, as opposed to improvisatory dance. Oiticica is clear to note in his writings on *Parangolé* that while "the link with the appearance of already existing things is there, [...] it is not fundamental in the genesis of the idea [of *Parangolé*], although it could be".³⁵ *Parangolé* is fundamentally a "position": a methodology that—per the definition of the term—fluctuates depending on context. It is not, Oiticica says, linked to "already existing things" out of necessity, though he leaves open the possibility for such a link to be drawn in performances of *Parangolé*.

In her *Installation Art*, Claire Bishop defines Oiticica's work (especially the *Parangolés*) as "social and political in inclination, engaging with the architecture of the *favelas* (slums) and the communities that live there".³⁶ The "engagement" of which Bishop speaks is the perceived appropriation of aesthetics and culture from the *favelas*, which she sees as a defining conceptual component of *Parangolé*. This approach is overly reductionist in its association of the material *Parangolé* with the limited context of Brazilian *favelas*, assuming that the "link" between objects in Brazilian society/culture ("already existing things") is "fundamental" to what *Parangolé* is.³⁷ Furthermore, it racializes the freedom of *Parangolé*, assuming its improvisatory methodology is tied to "non-Western traditions of dance and music" in a manner equating "improvisational skill with instinct as opposed to intellect".³⁸ Equating the elective improvisation of *Parangolé* with the necessary improvisations of favela design conflates two very different applications of a methodology, flattening the

³⁵ "Fundamental Bases for the Definition of *Parangolé*", 152.

³⁶ Bishop, Claire. *Installation Art*. (London, England: Tate Publishing, 2017), 63.

³⁷ Bishop also associates Oiticica with Herbert Marcuse's notion of repressive desublimation (Bishop 110), charging her interpretation of his work with anti-capitalist messages as well. The issue with his inclusion in Bishop's anthology comes from the fact *Parangolé* is not easily condensed into a digestible soundbite, making it difficult to briefly effectively encapsulate its complexities.

³⁸ Goldman, 16.

sociopolitical nuances of each. In short, it essentializes *Parangolé* as an aestheticization of poverty. Michael Asbury theorizes this essentializing of Oiticica's work occurs because "there has in effect been an uprooting of Oiticica's practice that posits him as a locus of otherness concurrently establishing a legitimizing process for (predominantly but not exclusively) Brazilian contemporary practices".³⁹ Oiticica's art has been "uprooted" from how it should be understood—as global in perspective—and recontextualized as essentially Latin American.

Contemporary institutional interpretations of *Parangolé* reinforce this approach. In 2007, for example, Tate Modern hosted *Parangolé* performances for the public at their Oiticica retrospective, *The Body of Color* (Fig. 3). Visitors could wear replicated *Parangolé* capes and dance to provided music. Interestingly, the Tate chose to use solely samba music in their group performances, hiring samba drummers and dancers to lead participants in choreographed steps. This performance prioritizes not the theory of improvisation but the cultural object of samba as the primary motivator of *Parangolé*. Despite Oiticica emphasizing in his definition of *Parangolé* that samba was the specific dance he chose for his "particular" case and not necessarily a fundamental component of realizing *Parangolé*, many continue to interpret it through this singular strain. The introduction of planned choreography to the practice of *Parangolé* also deflates the improvisational, organic spirit Oiticica sought to cultivate.

Performances of *Parangolé* in Ivan Cardoso's 1979 film *H.O.* offer compelling counterexamples to *Parangolé*'s inherent connection to samba. The film is a non-linear, non-narrative meditation on Oiticica's career, taking moments and works from his life and

³⁹ Asbury, Michael. "O Hélio não tinha ginga" in *Fios Soltos: A Arte de Hélio Oiticica* Paula Braga, ed. (São Paulo, Brazil: Perspectiva, 2008), 54.

assembling them in a haphazard collage of sounds, colors, and textures. Performances of *Parangolé* are interspersed throughout the film. While several of the performers shown in the film engage with uniquely Brazilian aesthetics, displaying the Brazilian flag as a background (Fig. 4) and dancing to samba music, some perform in more ubiquitous environments (Fig. 5) while dancing to poetry or, in one case, The Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil". The diverse performances of *Parangolé* Cardoso includes in his film demonstrate how variable the genre is. It is unbound by any singular cultural aesthetic; it works with a universal vocabulary, drawing upon trans-cultural objects (dance, rock, poetry, etc.) to produce a work unbound to any singular context.

More contemporary performances of *Parangolé* continue to explore the genre's malleability by improvising their own *Parangolés* in varied contexts. In 2014, *Exposição Parangoleando* transformed *Parangolé* into a high-end fashion campaign in the center of Brasília Shopping (Fig. 6). Curators Adriano and Fernando Guimarães exhibited photographs by João P. Teles of various models dancing in tailored *Parangolé* capes made from bright, expensive fabrics (Fig. 7).⁴⁰ Designers Anna Paula Osório, Cyntia Carla, Eduardo Barón, Leo Alves, and Taiana Miotto each contributed a custom *Parangolé* cape to the project.⁴¹ Text by Maríla Panitz outlined *Parangolé* to viewers to further contextualize the exhibited photographs. Instead of samba, the images of the performances were accompanied by the sounds of shoppers in the mall.

The *Parangolé* encapsulated in *Exposição Parangoleando* is twofold. The exhibited photographs document individual performances of *Parangolé* by the models, who enlivened

⁴⁰ <http://g1.globo.com/distrito-federal/noticia/2014/08/exposicao-homenageia-helio-otica-com-obras-de-estilistas-de-brasilia.html>.

⁴¹ http://df.divirtasemais.com.br/app/noticia/programe-se/2014/08/12/noticia_programe-se,150926/parangoleando-presta-homenagem-ao-irreverente-e-criativo-helio-otici.shtml.

their capes by improvising a performance watched and documented by a photographer. The exhibition itself can also be considered a *Parangolé*, with “wearers” embodied by the photographs and “watchers” embodied by the shoppers who pass through the exhibition space. It serves as an interruption to the typically utilitarian space of the shopping mall plaza, which shuttles clients to and from various stores. It invites people to pause what they are doing and explore the exhibition’s photographs and text, in a sense experimenting with their time and attention.

The fusion of fashion, commerce, and art history epitomized by *Exposição Parangoleando* explore the legacy of Oiticica’s theories and work in a global capitalist setting. Translating the aesthetics of *Parangolé* to couture garments with professional studio documentation seems far-removed from the motley composition and documentation of Oiticica’s first *Parangolé* capes and banners in the *favela* of Mangueira. Yet news outlets were overwhelmingly positive in their reviews of the show, recognizing it as a fitting “reverence” and “homage” to the “irreverence and creativity of Hélio Oiticica”.⁴² In occupying the space of a mall commons, the exhibition was an interruption in the daily lives of shoppers, who might be drawn to pause their routine to investigate this unusual installation. With its unconventional location and innovative display, *Exposição Parangoleando* engaged a *Parangolé* of high-art, fostering moments of improvisation and spontaneity among visitors to the exhibition.

In another *Parangolé* from 2006, a group of graduate students from the Universidade Federal de Sergipe (UF-Sergipe) produced a short video titled *Experiência N. 01 Parangolé Oiticica* documenting their performance of *Parangolé* in homage to Oiticica.⁴³ In the film, the

⁴² Ibid., translation my own.

⁴³ The participators, who only provided nicknames, are as follows: Babu, Daiane, Danielle, Flávia, Felipe, Isabela, Joel, Joelma, Lisandra, and Rogério.

students fashion *Parangolés* from recycled plastics and improvise repeated mantras (Fig. 8). “Eu implora pela morte do meu pai”, *I long for the death of my father*, states a woman staring at the camera through aviator sunglasses. She plays with the adjacent homonyms *pai* and *país*, which mean “father” and “country” respectively, invoking a rebellious, angst-filled spirit in her statement of discontent. Later, she lies beside a sign reading EXPERIMENTAR O EXPERIMENTAL, *to experiment the experimental*, one of Oiticica’s famous phrases. Another woman states “pai dei frito no café da manhã”, *I fried dad for breakfast*. “Eu comeu a minha mãe”, *I ate my mother*, groans a man as he lies on a sandy beach. The students then dance around abandoned structures wearing capes, holding effigies, and striking poses on outcroppings of rock overlooking the ocean.⁴⁴

Experiência N. 01 engages anthropophagic discourse as a critical ecological intervention. Anthropophagy as a Modernist cultural theory was first outlined in Oswald de Andrade’s 1928 “Manifesto Antropófago”. In this manifesto, de Andrade describes the merging of colonial institutions with indigenous Brazilian ones, reclaiming the trope of the Brazilian cannibal to claim that a new Brazil will emerge through the consumption of colonial oppressors by the oppressed, who then become a more powerful, hybridized iteration of themselves.⁴⁵ Through this allegorical cannibalism, anthropophagy, “makes explicit what is simply one of the many quotidian kinds of interactions among cultures that have been occurring ever since tribal groups have differed in their mutual encounters, but it localizes the interaction in Brazil (and the Americas)”.⁴⁶ Anthropophagy is a critical framework that addresses the global issues of colonialism through the “localized” language

⁴⁴ Translations my own.

⁴⁵ Garcia, Luis Felipe. “Only Anthropophagy Unites Us—Oswald de Andrade’s Decolonial Project” in *Cultural Studies* (December, 2018), 3.

⁴⁶ Willis, Bruce Dean. *Corporeality in Early Twentieth-Century Latin American Literature* (New York City, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 169.

of Brazilian class/race struggles. It is a “decolonial” practice, an affirmatively critical stance of colonialism that, “constitutes a political project to face the forms of domination entangled in the cultural, social and economical levels” of a world tainted by colonial endeavors.⁴⁷ The cannibalist language used by the UF-Sergipe students in their performance of *Parangolé* pays homage to the legacy of anthropophagy in the Brazilian avant-garde. In declaring that they have consumed their parents for breakfast and that they long for the death of their father, they metaphorically consume and supersede the generation that precedes them. They translate the colonial struggle of indigenous Brazilians and Europeans to the generational struggle of youth and adults.

The generational crisis embodied in this performance of *Parangolé* can be seen as a statement on environmental issues in the state of Sergipe. In 2006, Sergipe became a hotbed for Petrobras, Brazil’s largest multinational oil refinery corporation, due to the discovery of crude oil in the state’s namesake river basin.⁴⁸ Offshore drilling operations have been growing in the region since the discovery. The siting, use of plastics, and generational tension of the *Experiência N. 01 Parangolé* activate the genre as an expression of environmental anxiety. The performers lie on the Sergipe shoreline where, a few miles out to sea, oil companies are preparing to extract resources from the earth. The students are entangled in plastics, petroleum-based materials, which twist and knot around their bodies . The students’ desire to consume their elders comes from a desire to slow the influx of the environmentally lethal oil industry into their land. As a decolonial practice, anthropophagy counters this oppressive system with a system “grounded on the common property of land and the belonging of children not to the father, but to the tribe” as practiced by early

⁴⁷ Garcia, 2.

⁴⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-petrobras-gas-discovery/petrobras-confirms-natural-gas-find-in-sergipe-basin-idUSKCN1T11D9>.

indigenous Brazilian peoples.⁴⁹ Interpreted this way, the anthropophagic cries of the UF-Sergipe students are cries to remember that the land of Brazil belongs to more than just privatized corporations and those of a certain generation. It is something that will outlive its residents to be passed on generation after generation, and thus must be carefully cultivated.

It is interesting to note that these performances of *Parangolé* take place outside of conventional art institutions. *Exposição Parangoleando* was presented in a shopping mall, and the UF-Sergipe students' *Parangolé* was performed on a beach. They are peripheral in the sense they take place outside of expected places. At the same time, they are in dialogue with artistic institutions; the *Exposição* with fashion and the *Experiência* with Oiticica's art historical and philosophical discourses. *Parangolé* facilitates through dance an improvisatory experimentation with the participator's body, intentions, and desires. These performances demonstrate how wearers and watchers create a forum in which they contemplate their existence, experiment with ways of presenting themselves, and perform without constraints on their actions.

⁴⁹ Garcia, 8.

IV. ESTABLISHING ENDS

If each instance of *Parangolé* engages with improvisation in a unique way, the challenge becomes finding a sustainable theoretical model to foster dialogue about the genre as a whole. Improvisation is but a means to an end (freedom), which itself is precariously situated. While Oiticica's own conception of *Parangolé* is enlightening, it is one philosophical examination theorized before *Parangolé* was even performed. The actual ends of *Parangolé* remain uncertain, as enumerated as their means may be.

Parangolé is elusive in characterization, for each performance is a distinct experience. Some scholars have proposed an anthropophagic reading of *Parangolé* as a genre of metaphorical consumption and integration. Sérgio Bruno Martins believes anthropophagy was integral to Oiticica's work because it was "a means of addressing an operative mode he had already been formulating in his own earlier artistic practice".⁵⁰ Cynthia Canejo, however, eschews categorizing Oiticica as anthropophagic because it is a "closed context" that denies the "individuality" of Oiticica's work.⁵¹ Anthropophagy, while enlightening in cases such as *Experiência N. 01*, may limit the various modes of improvisation engaged with *Parangolé*, leaving ambiguous the experiences of participators whose roles and individual identities lend meaning to their performances.

Many scholars have turned to the concept of utopia to conceptualize the ends of *Parangolé*. Utopia was certainly at the forefront of Brazilian culture and politics when Oiticica first initiated *Parangolé*. Construction on Brasília, the nation's new capital, was nearing an end in 1960. With its uniform Modernist architecture, commanding thoroughways, and large-scale design, the city represented a bold future for the country. The centrality of the Museu

⁵⁰ Martins, Sérgio Bruno. "Hélio Oiticica: Mapping the Constructive" in *Third Text* (24:4, 2010), 409.

⁵¹ Canejo, Cynthia. "The Resurgence of Anthropophagy: Tropicália, Tropicalismo and Hélio Oiticica" in *Third Text* (18:1, 2004), 68.

Nacional da República in the urban plan gave art a privileged position as part of the complex with governmental buildings in the literal intersection of Brasília's main highways.⁵² Brasília was an ideal city, a utopic vision for Brazil forwarded by a government eager to push a narrative of stability and authority in the midst of political turmoil.

Anna Dezeuze categorizes *Parangolé* as “utopian”, imbuing it with an idealistic political agenda.⁵³ Her categorization comes from performing *Parangolé* with Oiticica's *P11 Parangolé capa 7*, “*sexo, violência, eis o que me agrada*” [sex and violence, that is what I like] (Fig. 9) as a scholarly inquiry, utilizing *Parangolé* as an art historical methodology. When reflecting on her public performances of *Parangolé*, Dezeuze notes how she became “uncomfortably aware” of the “statement” she made while wearing the *Parangolé* cape.⁵⁴ She felt out-of-place, as if she was existing alongside but separate from her surroundings. Much of the language she uses in describing *Parangolé* is of transcendence: she recalls how she “flew” over Parliament Hill as she danced, imagining “another kind of freer society” beyond her own (Fig. 10).⁵⁵ She sees her marginality as closely linked to the marginal aesthetics of the *favela* of Mangueira as well as Oiticica's own marginality as someone who left a life of luxury to inhabit a life on the periphery where he was always an outsider.⁵⁶

In seeking a theorization of *Parangolé* that encapsulates the genre's ever-evolving components, Dezeuze, like Bishop, elides Oiticica's elective marginality with the structural marginality of the residents of Mangueira. While both Oiticica and his colleagues in Mangueira were marginal characters, their positions are not interchangeable. Oiticica's

⁵² It is important to note that Brasília's construction displaced countless Candango people, the original keepers of the land. Many Candango men were also pressed into service to help build the city (Brooke & Quinn).

⁵³ Dezeuze, Anna. “Tactile Dematerialization, Sensory Politics: Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés*” in *Art Journal* (63:2, 2004), 70.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

decision to live and work in Mangureira was his choice, whereas the residents of Mangureira were relegated to their marginal status by realities outside their control. Oiticica's experience as a white man cannot be equated with those of his Afro-Brazilian and indigenous companions at the samba schools and in the streets of the *favela*. In relating herself to this legacy of monolithic marginality, Dezeuze "disentangles the *Parangolés* from the complex web that links the objects with Oiticica's texts" and theorizes the genre as electively inhabiting a peripheral identity as a means for imagining a utopic vision for the world.⁵⁷

Dezeuze's analysis of *Parangolé* taps into a key theme, the peripheral, as crucial to the genre. But other scholars push back on her utopic interpretation of *Parangolé*. Laura Harris argues that it was the very "non-metaphysical or nontranscendental nature of the performative acts in and through which they [Oiticica's works] are constituted and asserted" that attracted Oiticica to first experiment with *Parangolé*.⁵⁸ In other words, *Parangolé* is not about transcending reality but entering further into it. To reiterate Oiticica's phrasing, it is an experience of "Dionysian drunkenness" in which the participator's life experience is engaged, not evaded.

Sonia Salzstein encourages scholars to "remember here that the unlimited bond between art and life in Hélio Oiticica's work was accomplished without any political or intellectual proselytism".⁵⁹ Salzstein reiterates in this statement that there is no singular end of *Parangolé*, no utopic vision that is realized by its performance. She sees the "bond between art and life" of *Parangolé* established through the "actuality" of "indetermination".⁶⁰ In other words, she understands *Parangolé* to be a space of uncertainty in which a "lack of formal

⁵⁷ Ibid., 60.

⁵⁸ Harris, 36.

⁵⁹ Salzstein, Sonia. "Hélio Oiticica: Autonomy and the Limits of Subjectivity" tr. Judy Valentin and Stephen Berg. *Third Text* (8, 1994), 128.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 120.

limits” allows for virtually anyone to engage *Parangolé*.⁶¹ It is in “the unique universal interactive vocabularies they created and explored”, according to Simone Osthoff, that the *Parangolés* are so powerful.⁶² Their “universal” applicability is what makes them significant. Oiticica’s work does not generalize what it means to exist on the periphery, but preserves the individuality of the participators’ contributions to give form to what periphery means to them in their specific context.

Oiticica’s performance of *Parangolé* in *H.O.* illustrates the importance of individual expression to the genre. The scene begins with a title screen reading *Parangol’belium*, combining “*Parangolé*” with “Hélio” to emphasize the uniqueness of this performance. Oiticica enters the scene, an empty plaza framed by a Dutch angle camera, wearing glittery silver shoes, metallic green pants, and a semi-translucent *Parangolé*-like garment with the words *ten amor en guardo aqui* [“your love I keep here”] around the open edge (Fig. 11). Oiticica winds his way around the plaza, improvising his movements as he traces the footprint of the space. He twirls and pauses at will in a dance only he seems to know. As he approaches the camera, the camera itself moves towards him until the two meet. The camera travels up into the *Parangolé* to show Oiticica’s face, a visage of “intoxicated ecstasy”.⁶³ Here, Oiticica’s figure floats among the folds of fabric; his eyes are closed and his jaw is relaxed as if in a trance.

From this unusual angle, it appears as if Oiticica is inhabiting a space entirely separate from the plaza. Outside the material *Parangolé*, the world is harsh: intense lighting, hard cobbled street, and dramatic, modern lines delineate a clear-cut and straightforward

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Osthoff, Simone. *Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium*. (New York, NY: Atropos Press, 2009), 98.

⁶³ Hughes, 211.

environment. Inside the *Parangolé*, however, soft folds embrace Oiticica's partially-naked form, pressing lightly against his head and hands, enveloping him in an entirely different world. Going back and forth across the space, he gradually learns to move in relation to his surroundings. In other words, he gains understanding for how he inhabits the world.

This performance contrasts sharply with the ones shown earlier in *H.O.* It is somber, serious, and deeply personal. Emotions are not shown on the exterior, but require an intimate viewing experience to become visible. Oiticica's costume simultaneously resembles the dazzling garb of a *passista* as well as an outlandish rock star wardrobe without being clearly aligned with one or the other. This performance illustrates the malleability of *Parangolé* as a genre. It's appearance changes depending on who enacts it. The work is equally valid and successful when performed by residents of Mangueira and by Oiticica.

The indeterminacy of *Parangolé* and its malleable qualities are pushed to their limits in *Parangol'helium* because Oiticica does not actually use a *Parangolé* cape in this performance. He instead wears *B52 Sac Bólido 04 "Teu amor eu guardo aqui"* (Fig. 12), a *Bólido* that bears strong resemblance to a *Parangolé* cape. Unlike most *Parangolé* capes, the *Sac Bólido* is not constructed from a Möbius strip with individual openings for both arms and torso. With its singular entrance and exit, the *Sac Bólido* creates a system where that which enters the space of the *Bólido* circulates and then returns the same way it entered. Fiona Hughes argues that, despite not using a physical *Parangolé* object in this performance of *Parangolé*, Oiticica's performance still counts as part of the genre because it encapsulates the theory in a broader sense.⁶⁴ The *Bólidos* are a genre similar to the *Parangolés* in their relationship to participators, relying on an activation through movement and manipulation. They are unique in that they traditionally do

⁶⁴ Hughes, 212.

not enumerate a role for a watcher as the *Parangolés* do. The *Bólides* are arguably more individualistic in this difference.

The seamless incorporation of a *Bólide* into *Parangol'helium* draws out the deeply personal experience of *Parangolé*. Oiticica's performance differs drastically from the bright, playful *Parangolés* of the other artists featured in *H.O.* Yet it is still a *Parangolé*, not just because it is designated as such in the title sequence for the scene. Oiticica improvises his movements, subconsciously calling upon his life experiences to form his every move. The camera's movement into the *Sac Bólide* gives watchers of *Parangol'helium* a more intimate view of *Parangolé* than a typical watcher has. In penetrating the privacy of the *Sac Bólide*, the watcher and wearer are connected in the communal experience so essential to *Parangolé*.

The somber tone of *Parangol'helium* cannot be discussed without mention of its context. Oiticica filmed this performance as part of *H.O.* after returning from the United States in 1978, from where he had essentially been deported during a purge of queer immigrants by the United States federal government. His return to Rio and Mangueira was markedly poignant because “many of his friends from the favelas, however, had been murdered by police death squads, and many of the favelas had been razed”.⁶⁵ The Mangueira to which Oiticica returned in 1978 was not the Mangueira he encountered that fateful day he went to Estação Primeira. The very fabric of the *favela*—its people and structures—had been obliterated in the name of progress.

Parangol'helium is a reminder that *Parangolé* remains after its performers are gone. The dance continues. Oiticica's performance simultaneously laments the loss of his friends and proclaims that *Parangolé* is still very much alive and present. The elision of “*Parangolé*” and “Hélio” are not a statement about true authorship, but rather an acceptance of duty. Oiticica

⁶⁵ Harris, 29.

carries on with the spirit of *Parangolé* his experiences of the *favela*, which inform his improvisations as part of the experience he brings to his performance. The “intoxicated ecstasy” Oiticica shows in *Parangol’helium* is perhaps the intoxication of love and affection felt for those with whom he could no longer commune.

Just one year after the completion of Cardoso’s film Oiticica would die of a heart attack, making *Parangol’helium* one of his final works. But as *Parangol’helium* demonstrates, *Parangolé* persists still today. Against all odds, *Parangolé* continues to be performed across the globe, preserving the improvisational methodology Oiticica first initiated during his time in the *favelas*. The life of *Parangolé* recalls the statement Oiticica painted across his *P16 Parangolé capa 12* “*Da adversidade vivemos*” [“from adversity we live”] (Fig. 13). The persistence of *Parangolé* even after the death of its performers demonstrates a need to continually respond to its evolutions and inventions. It reinforces the genre’s malleability and unboundedness. Untethered to any singular performer, *Parangolé* transforms and expands, challenging theorists and historians to conceptualize a sustainable framework for contextualizing the genre.

V. EVOLUTIONS AND REVOLUTIONS

The *P16 Parangolé capa 12* is a poetic embodiment of the persistence of *Parangolé* and its evolution. The cape consists of various fabrics in beige tones. The body of the garment is made of roughly-sewn lengths of burlap. A light linen wraps around the midsection, emblazoned with the cape's titular phrase. A clear plastic pouch of wood shavings just below the armhole of the garment gives unequal weight to one side. A single shoulder band emphasizes the asymmetrical nature of this cape, perhaps alluding to the unequal distribution that has led to the "adversity" in which its wearer lives. The object itself was reconstructed in 1992 due to its poor condition, finding life anew despite the adversity faced by damage and conservation challenges.⁶⁶

The statement "from adversity we live" projects a survivalist message, one of adaptability and constant readiness, which encapsulates the ever-changing and persistent nature of *Parangolé*. Irene Small uses this as a point of entry for *discussing Parangolé* as morphology, the "study of organic form and its changes over time".⁶⁷ Small uses an applied study of evolution, the repetitive process of natural selection played out over time, to explain *Parangolé*. She explains Oiticica's connection to morphological studies through his work at the Museu Nacional with his entomologist father, with whom he published several taxonomic reports. Small hones in on the concepts of taxonomy and evolution, which she says are defined by "interrelatedness and constant change".⁶⁸ As connected entities, taxonomy and evolution are an "epistemology, a theory of *how* we know what we know about the world".⁶⁹ Small argues that in creating taxonomic classifiers, taxonomists have the

⁶⁶ *Parangolé* capes are particularly challenging to conserve due to their improvised construction and delicate material. This was most evident in a 2009 housefire where Oiticica's work is stored that destroyed many of the capes (Small 229).

⁶⁷ Small, Irene. "Morphology in the Studio: Hélio Oiticica at the Museu Nacional" in *Getty Research Journal* (1, 2009), 109.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

power to “rearrange” the “pattern” of evolution.⁷⁰ They not only respond to the “constant change” of evolution, they create the change itself.

The end of morphology, according to Small, is “evolutionary, though nonprogressive” change, “given meaning within the artist’s conceptual framework and preexisting objects in the world”.⁷¹ As a morphological pursuit, *Parangolé* then aims to “multiply the possibilities of what a body might be”.⁷² For Small, a single performance of *Parangolé* registers a moment within an ongoing investigation into multiple cultural systems”.⁷³ Understood from a morphological perspective, *Parangolé* is a never-ending process of invention and change. It “embodies emergence in its very form”.⁷⁴ As participators manipulate the materials of the *Parangolé*, they create new abstract forms previously unseen. These forms are fleeting, for with each new movement the participator generates a new work.

By distinguishing between “evolutionary” and “progressive”, Small deftly evades constructing a linear history of *Parangolé*, which itself embodies a collapse of linear timelines through its improvisatory methods. As participators draw upon their life experiences, folding them into one another, the lives of wearers and watchers become a single existence, simultaneously constituted of many parts and one whole. The roles of watcher and wearer become fluid as individuals exchange roles and *Parangolé* objects, creating a particularly queer social relationship.⁷⁵ This contributes to *Parangolé*’s morphological methodology; instead of predating itself on a “foundational binary” like “paired sexual difference” as in taxonomy,

⁷⁰ Ibid., 110.

⁷¹ Ibid., 118.

⁷² Small, *Hélio Oiticica*, 216.

⁷³ Ibid., 227.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 216.

⁷⁵ Harris, 46.

Parangolés “exchange this epistemological notion [...] for one predicated on radical change”.⁷⁶ In other words, *Parangolé* is a morphology of morphology; an ever-changing method of documenting change.

To further reiterate the morphological fluidity of roles in *Parangolé*, *Parangolé* objects can also be exchanged, passed on, and reused, sometimes in the same performance, changing wearers into watchers and watchers into wearers. Documentation of such an occurrence exists. In a second photograph of Oiticica and his collaborators at *Opinião 65* (Fig. 14), Oiticica and several of the other participators are holding and wearing different *Parangolés* than they do in Figure 1. Oiticica stands in the background holding *P1 Parangolé estandarte 1*, not wearing the *capa 5* he adorned in the picture taken by his brothers. *Capa 5* appears to be worn by a woman, whose face is concealed but whose white heeled shoes are just visible. A grown man dances with *P2 Parangolé bandeira 01* instead of the small boy pictured in Figure 1. Roles have changed with the exchange of *Parangolés*. People who are watchers in one moment become wearers in another. Roles are not biologically determined nor biologically fixed. They are shed and adopted at will.

The text on *Parangolé capas 11* and *12* also demonstrate the queer malleability of roles when performing *Parangolé*. As previously stated, in reading the text on the capes (“Eu incorporo a revolta”, “Da adversidade vivemos”), which rests at an illegible angle to the wearer, the watcher actively enfolds themselves within the *Parangolé* experience. These first-person statements enfold the watcher into the experience of the wearer, who also embodies the “I” in these performatives. As these instances demonstrate, roles in *Parangolé* are as changing as the genre itself.

⁷⁶ Small, *Hélio Oiticica*, 216.

The double focus of morphology in *Parangolé* lends itself well to queer interpretations because instead of fixedness and systematic existence, it embraces departure and innovation. Queerness is arguably infused into the genre's very predicate. Small notes that "Oiticica's first sexual encounters [with men] occurred in the same period that he conceived of the *Parangolé*" and that this connection imbues a queer sexual function into his work.⁷⁷ *Parangolés* are in many ways a metaphor for the queer experience. They facilitate an intuitive, existential examination of the self free from predetermined, normative behaviors. In place of convention and conformity, *Parangolé* invites deviation and self-determination.

Few talk about the passionately sexual text Oiticica includes on some of his *Parangolés* from a queer perspective, opting instead for a more general anarchist, dissident interpretation.⁷⁸ The *Sac Bólido* used in *Parangol'belium* reads "your love I keep here", and the *Parangolé capa* used by Anna Dezeuze reads "sex and violence, that is what I like". *Parangolé* performances that use these objects are charged with a sexual energy, as these statements are engaged by both wearers and watchers in a communal experience. The performer "guards love" and "likes sex" regardless of the identity of the watcher, entering into an intimate, gender-blind communion. *Parangolé* can be understood as a performance of queerness, for like *Parangolé* to be queer is to continually perform against normative structures and experiment outside and among matrices of gender, race, and sexuality.

As a morphological pursuit, *Parangolé* can be understood as a continual orientating and disorientating of the participators, as a phenomenology. It is widely known that Oiticica was heavily influenced by Merleau-Ponty and Husserl's notions of phenomenology.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Ibid., 215.

⁷⁸ Oiticica's grandfather was a renowned anarchist, as was Oiticica's father, who raised Hélio and his brothers along anarchist principles from an early age (Harris 26).

⁷⁹ Small, 149.

Oiticica's other sources of inspiration, including the work of Modernist Paul Klee, indirectly tie him to phenomenological practices as well.⁸⁰ This comes through in the language Oiticica uses to describe *Parangolé* as a "position." While the term "position" is meant here in a conceptual sense, it rests uneasily between the realms of concept and concrete. Language around "positions" often resorts to corporeal jargon: stance, perspective, viewpoint, etc. Thus, a position can be simultaneously an emotional-intellectual existence *and* a physical reality.

What makes the phenomenology of *Parangolé* specifically queer is its emphasis on "disorientation", a term Ahmed develops in her writing. Queer phenomenology involves "an orientation toward what slips, which allows what slips to pass, in the unknowable length of its duration", allowing "the oblique to open another angle on the world".⁸¹ Disorientation serves a queer function in that it capitalizes on the slippage of meaning and destabilization of orientation to open new opportunities and realities. It is "not be a politics of the will, but an effect of how we do politics, which in turn is shaped by a prior matter — simply, how we live".⁸² Sara Ahmed argues that queerness can be understood as a disorientation because it "involves a different way of extending the body in the world through reorientating one's relation to others".⁸³ Queerness rethinks compulsory heterosexuality, questioning the singular orientation of male to female and considering alternative paths with different ends. It requires a disorientation from heterosexual matrices and reorientation in a direction of the individual's choosing. To consciously enact a disorientation is to approach life from an experimental position. It is to perceive things as they are and enact how things could be. As

⁸⁰ Hughes, 196.

⁸¹ Ahmed Sara. "Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology" in *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* (12:4, Durham, North Carolina. Duke University Press, 2006), 566.

⁸² Ibid., 569.

⁸³ Ibid., 103.

an experimental position, *Parangolé* encapsulates a spirit of aesthetic disorientation, in which participators are encouraged to “slip” out of the roles they typically inhabit and explore new ways of being.

In breaching normative modes of being through dance and dress, *Parangolé* facilitates a turn in the participator’s orientation towards the unknown. To use Oiticica’s own words, *Parangolé* initiates a “state of invention” in which the participator becomes an essential actor who makes something from the potentiality they initiate in their performance.⁸⁴ In realizing their performance, participators “invent” a way of being themselves by experimenting with how they express their bodily presence. They open up a new orientation towards which their body faces, even if just for a moment, by engaging their improvisational responses to the conditions of *Parangolé*.

Disorientation is something that runs through Oiticica’s entire *oeuvre*, spanning back to his early *Metaesquemas*. In a brief analysis of his early works, Fiona Hughes notes that “Oiticica makes spatial relations even more visible [in his *Metaesquemas*], by attracting the eye to the spaces between the forms, which appear as if they could be about to shift position”, inviting the viewer to “look at the spaces into which the forms might move”.⁸⁵ Instead of demarcating stable, fixed points on his cardboard paintings, Oiticica uses form and composition to draw attention to the uninhabited spaces of the *Metaesquema*, making them sites of exciting potentiality.

An example of this can be seen in one of his earliest *Metaesquemas* from 1956 (Fig. 15). The work is simply composed. A border of corrugated cardboard and four black rhombuses make up the corners of the composition. They surround a ring of eight evenly-

⁸⁴ Oiticica, Hélio. “Ivan Cardoso entrevista Hélio Oiticica” in *Ivampirismo o cinema em pânico*, ed. Ivan Cardoso and R. F. Lucchetti (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Editora Brasil-América/Fundação do Cinema Brasileiro, 1990), 73.

⁸⁵ Hughes, 200.

interspersed rhombuses, six of which are black and two of which are a deep maroon. In the center of the composition sit four small rhombuses of maroon, red, and black. The work reads similarly to an optical illusion. The viewer's eyes shift focus between the painted shapes and the negative space in an attempt to compose a coherent image. The dynamic angles of the rhombuses thrust into the negative space as if the forms themselves are launching into the untreated parts of the cardboard.

The pushing of the viewer's attention from painted forms to unpainted space is a method of disorientation. The viewer, expecting their focus to be facilitated towards the positive space of the work, finds themselves thrust into the traditionally "negative" space. Within conventional norms of interpretation, this is confusing. Interpretation of the *Metaesquema* requires the viewer to disorient themselves, to step outside preconceived methods of approach and consider for a moment the potentialities of what *could be* rather than what *is*. In this way, the *Metaesquema* uses rupture to make the viewer aware of their own behavior, specifically their approach to art.

If the spaces "between" forms becomes the focus of the work, then the very space between the work and the viewer—another type of space between forms—is incorporated into the work itself. The world of the viewer is brought in to the world of the *Metaesquema*, changing the relationship between art object and viewer. As Fiona Hughes writes, "there is no longer a front and a back nor indeed sides, except in relation to our own perspective".⁸⁶ It is through disorientation that the viewer becomes a participator in the art process, contributing invaluable to the significance of the work. Without the perception of the viewer/participator, the potentialities of Oiticica's *Metaesquemas* go unrealized.

⁸⁶ Hughes, 201.

Like the *Metaesquemas*, the disorientation of *Parangolé* activates the viewer/participator's creative intellectual capacities to complete (or realize) the work in question by turning away from one orientation towards another. In facilitating non-normative behaviors, *Parangolé* disorients participators from the normalcy of their existence, pushing them to experiment with new ways of being and inhabiting space. Art no longer sits on a wall adjudicating from outside the realm of the viewer; it becomes part of the viewer's existence. As Sara Ahmed writes:

Phenomenology asks us to be aware of the 'what' that is around. After all, if consciousness is intentional, then we are not only directed toward objects, but those objects also take us in a certain direction. The world that is around has already taken certain shapes, as the very form of what is more and less familiar.⁸⁷

The affect of "what" surrounds individuals forms the basis of phenomenological inquiry. Objects act upon individuals as much as individuals act upon objects. Objects "take us" in a specific "direction" by the very fact they are constructed certain ways. Precisely how this occurs depends on the individual case at hand. What can be understood generally about phenomenological interactions is that there exists in each a unique mix of physical and intellectual relations that equally contribute to the affectivity of an experience. *Parangolé*, then, can be understood as a phenomenological method.

The incorporation of dance as an essential component of *Parangolé* is essential to the performance of disorientation. Improvisational dance, as previously stated, encourages participators to suspend normative modes of movement in favor of spontaneous, non-utilitarian bodily action. Rather than express themselves through mundane tasks of life, participators have the opportunity to imagine expressive movements free from the confines of the conventions that dictate their existence. It is an opportunity to disorient or

⁸⁷ Ahmed, 545.

“deintellectualize” the self as a means for understanding more fully how the self operates in space. As performance theorist Kristine Stiles notes, performing “operates through representation and presentation, and therefore may be understood as an aesthetic discourse on what it means ‘to be.’ In performance, artists present and represent themselves in the process of *being and doing*, and these acts take place in a cultural context for a public to witness”.⁸⁸ Performances like *Parangolé* are not an escape from being, but a radical reentry into being. They “reorientate” the participator, to utilize Ahmed’s terminology.

The disorientation of *Parangolé* can be seen in existing documentation of its performances. In a 1967 photograph taken by Hélio Oiticica, Nildo de Manguera wears the *P15 Parangolé capa 11 “Eu incorporo a revolta”* (Fig. 16). Very little of Nildo can be seen around the unwieldy cape he wears. His black slacks are covered above the knee and his entire torso is obscured from sight. Nildo’s fingers wrap around the edges of the *Parangolé* cape he wears, and the top of his face shows the edges of a wry smile and partially-closed eyes. The lush vegetation in the background is parted to reveal Rio de Janeiro on the horizon of the image and a sliver of Manguera, which rises up to the cobbled street on which Nildo stands.

The cape itself is comprised of disparate materials. Green and red squares of fabric, which appear stuffed with material, provide a sharp contrast in color around the skirt. Burlap and woven mat-like flaps intersect at unusual angles, forming the bodice of the cape. Emblazoned across the bright red part of the cape is the phrase *eu incorporo a revolta*, “I embody the revolt.” The statement is void of context; it offers no specifics as to what “revolt” is being “embodied.” As Christopher Dunn writes in his essay on the Brazilian avant-garde practices, embracing “counterculture” through revolt “could mean several levels

⁸⁸ Stiles, Kristine. “Performance” in *Critical Terms for Art History*, 2nd edition, ed. Robert Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 75.

of dissent, from pursuing a modestly ‘alternative’ lifestyle within a middle-class structure to more radical options of ‘dropping out’.⁸⁹ Countercultural terms like “revolution” indicate a variety of actions ranging from the mundane to the physically violent. A “revolution” could entail a personal epiphany or a mobilized movement of historic proportions. The minimal context of the *Parangolé capa* shown in Figure 15 makes it difficult to discern which of these is more apt to the current situation.

The way in which the red flap of Nildo’s cape is flared, as well as the position of Nildo’s feet, indicate he is moving, perhaps turning. He himself is in the midst of a physical “revolution,” turning to face many directions in the span of a second. Understood from this position, there is no “front” or “approach” to the photograph’s subject, for his three-hundred sixty degree orientation makes every angle a potential angle of approach. To talk about the photograph as having a foreground and background, then, is misleading. Had the photograph been taken a moment sooner or a moment later, Nildo could easily have been facing Manguera, or Rio, or the verdant greenery, making the viewer part of his background as opposed to that which he faces.

This photograph is effective for discussing *Parangolé* as a queer phenomenology because it speaks to the variable proximities contained within a single moment. Through performances with this cape, watcher and wearer are brought into a proximity that destabilizes their roles, and through the revolution of the wearer the performance is orientated towards many fronts at the same time. Like the tree in *Gênese do Parangolé*, Nildo’s *Parangolé* expands and simultaneously grows in multitudinous directions. Nildo’s

⁸⁹ Dunn, 231.

performance in *capa 11* demonstrates how the genre facilitates a collapse of structural roles, which include such matrices as gender and sexuality.

Another of Nildo de Mangueira's performances, this time with *P16 Parangolé capa 12* "*Da adversidade vivemos*" ["from adversity we live"], bears striking thematic similarities to his performance with *P15 Parangolé capa 11*. It is documented in a black-and-white photograph in the Projeto Hélio Oiticica archives (Fig. 17). Nildo again has a playful air about him; he expresses mock surprise at the object in his hands. He is adorned with *P16 Parangolé capa 12*, which conforms to his lean frame. Around him are large and small hewn stones that form the retention wall at his side and the road beneath his feet, which itself leads to the village behind Nildo. The statement on the cape, "From adversity we live", again is phrased in the first-person, collapsing the divide between watcher and wearer. In this way, the object "takes us" in a specific "direction" by inserting us into the scene of "adversity" we are watching. We the watcher become a part of the process.

The *Parangolé* cape also acts on its wearer in more literal ways. The wearer must decide how they fashion the cape on themselves: over which shoulder does the strap go? Does the linen with text get draped over the shoulder or freely hang around their body? Should the cape be fastened above or below the knee? With each of these seemingly inconsequential decisions comes a series of consequences that will dictate the experience of *Parangolé* enacted. The disorientations of these decisions lie in "how" one "lives" in the cape. Once the *Parangolé* is placed upon the body, additional conditions affect the performance of the wearer. The wood chips destabilize their balance, "disorienting" them from the conventions of how they typically carry their body. The wood is just heavy enough to feel without completely inhibiting the movement of the wearer. The bodice of the cape is narrow and extends past the knees of the wearer, which limits movement significantly. In directing

the wearer's movements away from certain habits (walking with full strides, dancing and widening the stance, etc.) and towards others (small, detailed steps, close positions, etc.), the cape disorients the wearer from conventions of existence and creates a space in which new methods of movement are conceived. In this way, the *Parangolé* cape “defamiliariz[es] the relationship between the body and its material accoutrements” and “reintroduce ‘wearing’ as a means to invent bodily techniques anew”.⁹⁰ The body of the participator is disoriented from normative methods of investiture in an effort to push the participator towards “invention.”

It is through the non-normative conditions *Parangolé* establishes that these performances “uncover emergent meanings, suggesting the interconnection of meaning and style within life more generally”.⁹¹ As with all performances of *Parangolé*, when disorientation succeeds, or rather when “orientation fails, something happens. Things move. The double negative [of disorientation] does not necessarily lead to depression. It can make other impressions”.⁹² Through individual experiments in which the wearer suspends normative structures of existence—namely movement—*Parangolé* reveals to participators broader truths about themselves. It informs how they approach new situations, how they respond to “adverse” conditions, and paradoxically inserts them more fully into their daily existence through their removal from it. The “failed” orientation of *Parangolé capa 16* and all *Parangolé* capes is an opportunity to “make other impressions” in the lives of participators by giving them the chance to experiment with and invent new ways of being, or at the very least better understand their current state.

⁹⁰ Small, 207.

⁹¹ Hughes, 204.

⁹² Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 146.

The changing of roles and the malleability of who is being “active” and “passive” in enacting *Parangolé* parallels queer sexual practices, where activity and passivity are interchangeable between actors, who respond to each other in the moment and “invent” new modes of interaction as their encounter progresses. To return to Ahmed’s text, “objects do not only do what we intend them to do”.⁹³ It is the reason Oiticica can use a *Sac Bólido* in a performance of *Parangolé* without compromising the integrity of the performance. Roles are initial orientations; they can be easily disorientated, and often are for aesthetic purposes. Exact replication is impossible to accomplish through *Parangolé*, but repetition of a sensibility is most certainly within grasp. This sensibility, engaged through improvisation, is a desire to continually queer the self through disorientation or—to use Small’s term—morphology. *Parangolé* then is a repetition of change in perpetuity, where fixed strains inevitably dissipate and give way to new manifestations *ad nauseam*.

⁹³ Ibid., 47.

VI. GOING ATOMIC

The ends of disorientation are never to leave the participator in a state of confusion. While rupture and departure from daily existence are inevitable, reentry and re-orientation are crucial ends. Queerness is only established once its orientation has been defined. Orientations are directional, they “point us to the future, to what we are moving toward”, and “also keep open the possibility of changing directions and of finding other paths”.⁹⁴ To disorient oneself is to “change directions”, but changing directions only happens when another “path” is found. As Ahmed notes, sexuality “can be considered a spatial formation not only in the sense that bodies inhabit sexual spaces [...], but also in the sense that bodies are sexualized through how they inhabit space”.⁹⁵ As a practice involving the direction of attraction towards bodies and individuals, sexuality relies on spatial and directional language: we are attracted *to* things, we have sexual *orientations*, and those orientations indicate where our feelings are *directed*.

Ahmed’s conception of disorientation and queer phenomenology departs from *Parangolé* in its reliance on repetition. For Ahmed, bodies “acquire orientation through the repetitions of some actions over others, as actions that have certain ‘objects’ in view”.⁹⁶ It is through “repetition” that disorientation succeeds because directions are not instantaneously laid out in completeness upon their first engagement. As two-dimensional vectors, directions require movement along a line, a temporal engagement, to be realized at least in part. Ahmed argues that “repetition” of specific action(s) is the way in which disorientation successfully reorients individuals towards new horizons.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 178.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 67.

⁹⁶ Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 58.

Repetition of movement in *Parangolé* is a near impossibility. To recreate an improvised action is to remove the improvisational quality that distinguishes it. If *Parangolé* is about detaching from methodical reality and embracing the unexpected, then it is possible to argue that *Parangolé* can never fully disorientate a participator because the instant an orientation is repeated it becomes normative. Following this logic, *Parangolé* exists as a state of invention in which realized, concretized inventions are as fleeting as the emotions that inspire them. What is more, *Parangolé* capes “can be worn by anyone”.⁹⁷ With every new wearer, a new *Parangolé* is created, establishing not a linear strain but a sporadic cluster of performances.

The improvisational, inventive experience of performing *Parangolé*, does not utilize repetition or reproduction to “reveal the world” to the participator, but rather uses moments and experiences as distinct, atemporal points within the realm of the participator’s life. It is not a singular progressive strain with linear branches nor is it a process of subversive repetition as Ahmed implies with her queer phenomenology. *Parangolé* utilizes moments of spontaneity whose order appears scattered and disparate, but in fact is organized around the improvisational logic of the performer.

I propose an atomic model as the conceptual basis for Oiticica’s *Parangolés*. In an atom, electrons orbit a nucleus at speeds beyond visible comprehension. They exist in simultaneity in the “electron cloud” (Fig. 18), the area immediately cushioning the nucleus, which itself consists of variable protons and neutrons. While seemingly disordered and untethered to any particular directional flow, the electrons of an atom remain within the electron cloud, spontaneously orbiting the nucleus and adhering to indeterminate laws of physics and probability.

⁹⁷ Small, 220.

As close to taxonomy as Oiticica's methodology seems to be, his interest in atomic physics seems also to have played an integral role in his work. Within his taxonomic system, Oiticica relied heavily on language of an atomic nature. His *Nuclei* series is the most obvious connection, using the name of a subatomic particle ("nucleus") as its classification. The *Bólides* get their title from an "astronomical term that refers to meteors that explode in the atmosphere, emitting energy and light".⁹⁸ The energy, light, and explosions of astronomical *Bólides* come down to atomic reactions, making them ultimately phenomena of physics.

The *Parangolés* follow the arbitrary yet orbital logic of atomic structure through their non-linear, spontaneous nature. Individual movements can be understood as occupying points within the "electron cloud", the space around the performer, at supposedly random and illogical instances in time and space. The order of movements, however, is clear to the participator/wearer of the material *Parangolé*, who gives their performance an unseen orbital logic. In this way, structure and orientation are produced not through repetition, but the spontaneity and irregularity of improvisation that characterizes subatomic motion.

Extending the metaphor of the atomic model, a performance of *Parangolé* has a spherical orientation with points of access to and from every angle around the space it occupies. This also means that there is no "correct" way to approach *Parangolé*, much like how there is no "front" or "back" to Oiticica's *Metaesquemas*. Recalling the way in which Nildo de Manguiera twirls in Figure 16, *Parangolé* is about facing towards and being faced by every angle at any moment. Like Oiticica's *Metaesquemas*, it is about the spaces where movements *can* occur as much as it is about the space where movements *do* occur. To incorporate the "entire life experience" of the participator, all directions are incorporated into the orientation of *Parangolé*. The "Dionysian drunkenness" to which Oiticica alludes in

⁹⁸ Ibid., 153.

his definition of the genre is the disorientation of seeing in simultaneity the many potential directions of orientation for the participators in *Parangolé*.

Most importantly, *Parangolé* goes beyond simply demonstrating what can theoretically be. Through its enactment, it becomes a concrete way of being, an invention of the participators. The genre does not get trapped in a cycle of metamorphosis in perpetuity. It manifests in performances that, while fleeting, exist in concrete form. What these performances reveal about the participators may not seem ordered or particularly well-oriented, but when properly engaged, achieve the awareness of self central to Oiticica's vision for the genre.

Approaching *Parangolé* from a theory of atomic structure provides a framework for conceptualizing how performances of *Parangolé* utilize disidentification to formulate a cohesive work. It allows for an understanding of the genre as simultaneously oriented towards many horizons. *Parangolé* establishes itself as a distinct temporal space by drawing together everything in the life of the participators. All directions, actions, beliefs, and emotions are potential points of orientation for the participator. The genre is paradoxically everything and nothing, reliant on the actions of the participators to manifest. Participators bring to *Parangolé* experiential knowledge, which varies drastically depending on the backgrounds of the participators. Additionally, participators bring their own initial orientations, things towards which they face in terms of aspirations, desires, and perceptions of the world. To enact *Parangolé* is to engage these disparate, sometimes contradictory influences all at once, and to trust one's intuition to navigate the complexities of the genre.

The birth of *Parangolé* is rooted in queer, hybrid existences. *Parangolé* is an inherently destabilizing genre. From these origins, it has grown in many directions, adopting many faces and points of orientation. To fully appreciate *Parangolé*, it is essential to understand its infinite

facets and non-linearity. It is a continually developing concept whose iterations form asynchronous points in a cloud of connectivity. *Parangolé* constantly reinvents form through movement not for the sake of invention, but for the sake of awareness. The activation of improvisation as a methodology in *Parangolé* is not simply a teleological examination of change. *Parangolé* is a tool for engaging queer experience. By inviting participators to withdraw from pre-existing matrices of existence (gender, class, sexuality, race, etc.) through improvisation, *Parangolé* gives wearers and watchers the opportunity to create their own matrices. The spectrum of emotions, experiences, and outcomes present in various iterations of *Parangolé* mirrors the diversity of queer identities. It is, by transitive property, a methodology of queerness.

APPENDIX: FIGURES



Figure 1 - Photograph of Oiticica and collaborators at *Opinião 65* (1965) with *P1 Parangolé Estandarte 1* (1964), *P2 Parangolé Bandeira 01* (1964), and *P8 Parangolé capa 5, Homenagem à Mangueira* (1965). MAM Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Figure 2 – Desdemone Bardin and Hélio Oiticica, *Gênese do Parangolé* (1964). Projeto Hélio Oiticica.



Figure 3 - *Parangolé* at the Tate Modern (2007) with hired dancers in metallic shoes, London, England. Photograph courtesy Tate Modern.



Figure 4 - Ivan Cardoso, Still from *H.O.* (1979).

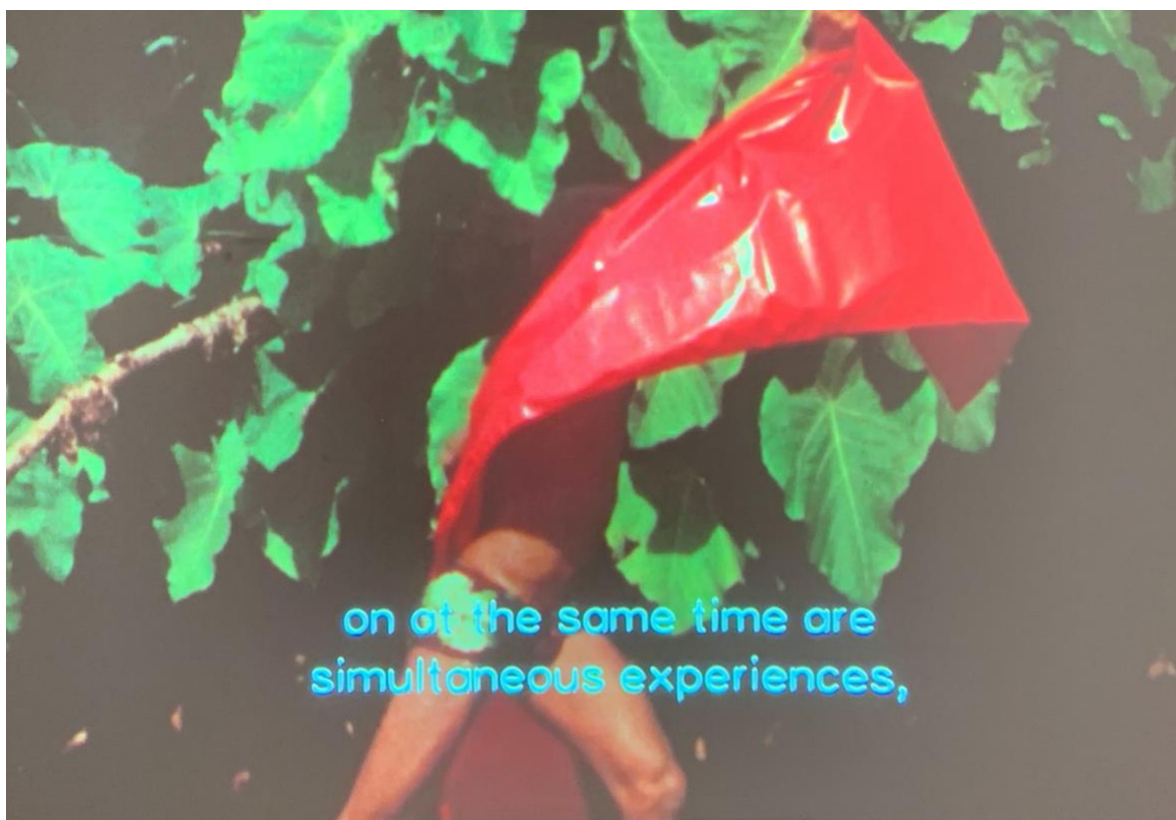


Figure 5 – Ivan Cardoso, Still from *H.O.* (1979).



Figure 6 - *Exposição Parangoleando* (2014), Brasília Shopping.



Figure 7 - João P. Teles, Photograph for *Exposição Parangoleando* (2014).



Figure 8 - Still from *Experiência N. 01 Parangolé Oitica* (2006).

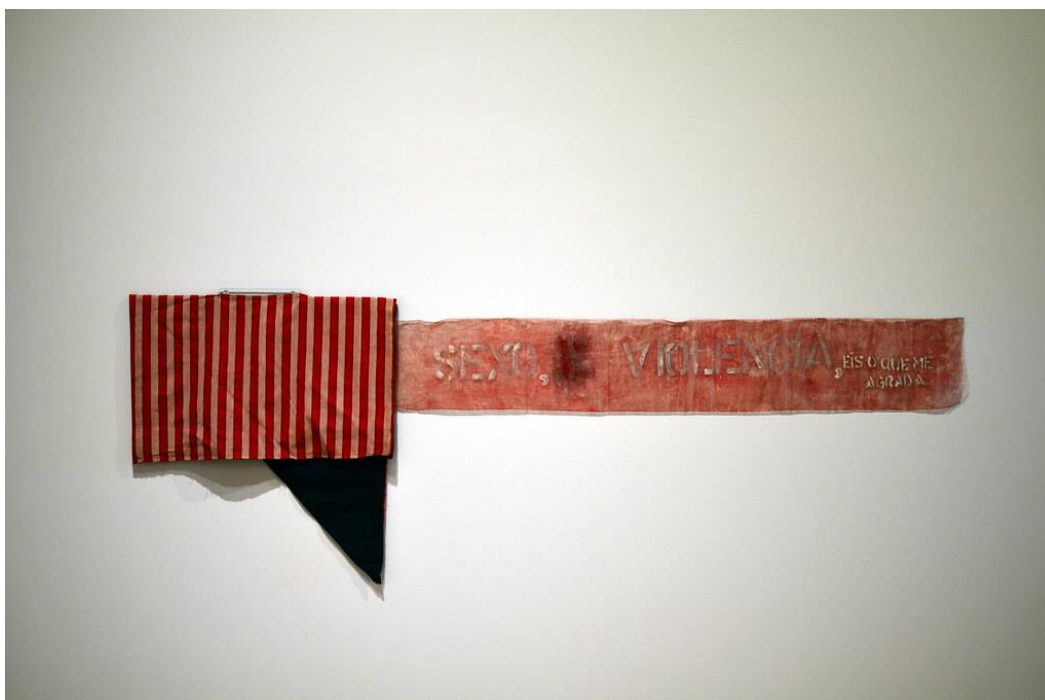


Figure 9 - Hélio Oiticica, *P11 Parangolé capa 7 "sexo, violência, eis o que me agrado"* (1966).



Figure 10 - Anna Dezeuze, *Parangolé with P11 Parangolé capa 7 "sexo, violência, eis o que me agrado"* (2004).



Figure 11 - Ivan Cardoso, stills from *H.O.* (1979) depicting Oiticica performing *Parangolé* with *B52 Sac Bólido 04*.



Figure 12 - Hélio Oiticica with *B52 Sac Bólido 04* "*Ten amor eu guardo aqui*" (1966 - 1967).



Figure 13 – *P16 Parangolé capa 12 “Da adversidade vivemos”* (1965, reconstructed 1992). Burlap, linen, paint, plastic, and woodchips. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Figure 14 – Photograph of Oiticica and collaborators at *Opinião 65*.

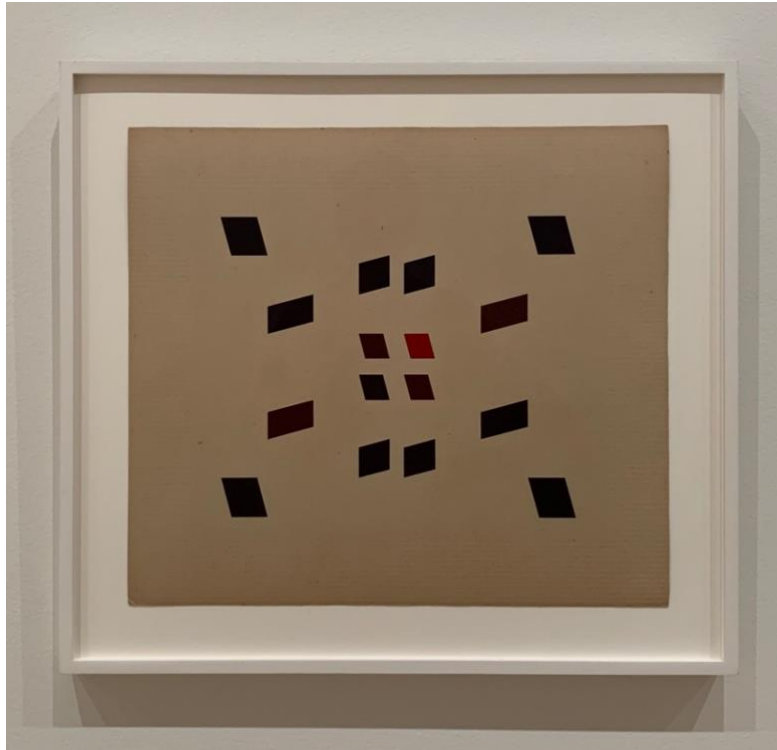


Figure 15 – Hélio Oiticica, *Metaesquema* (1956), gouache on incised cardboard. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Figure 16 – Hélio Oiticica(?), 1968 Photograph of Nildo de Manguêira wearing *P15 Parangolé capa 11 "Eu incorporo a revolta"* (1967). Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.

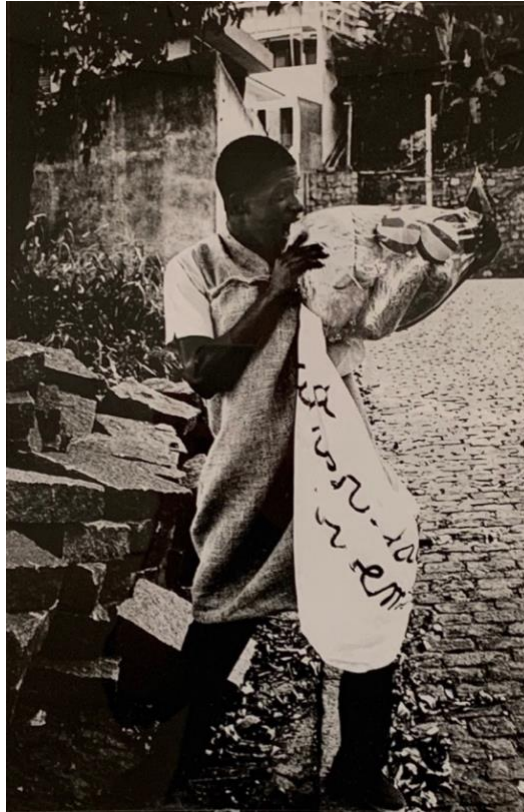


Figure 17 – Nildo de Mangueira wearing *P16 Parangolé capa 12 “De adversidade vivemos”* (1965). 2019 Digital print at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.

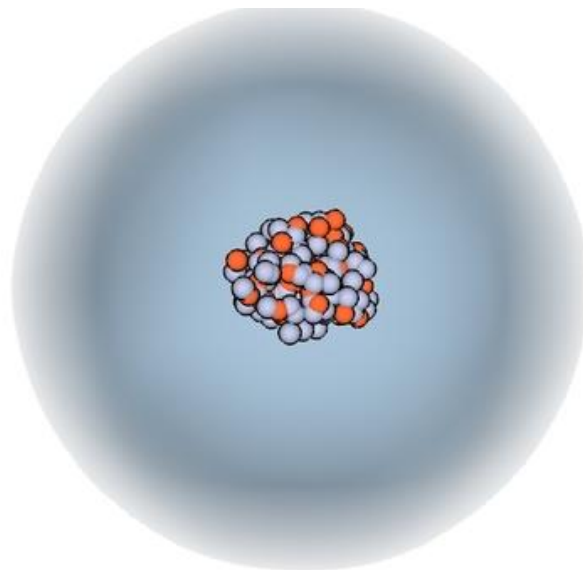


Figure 18 - Electron cloud model diagram of an atom

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